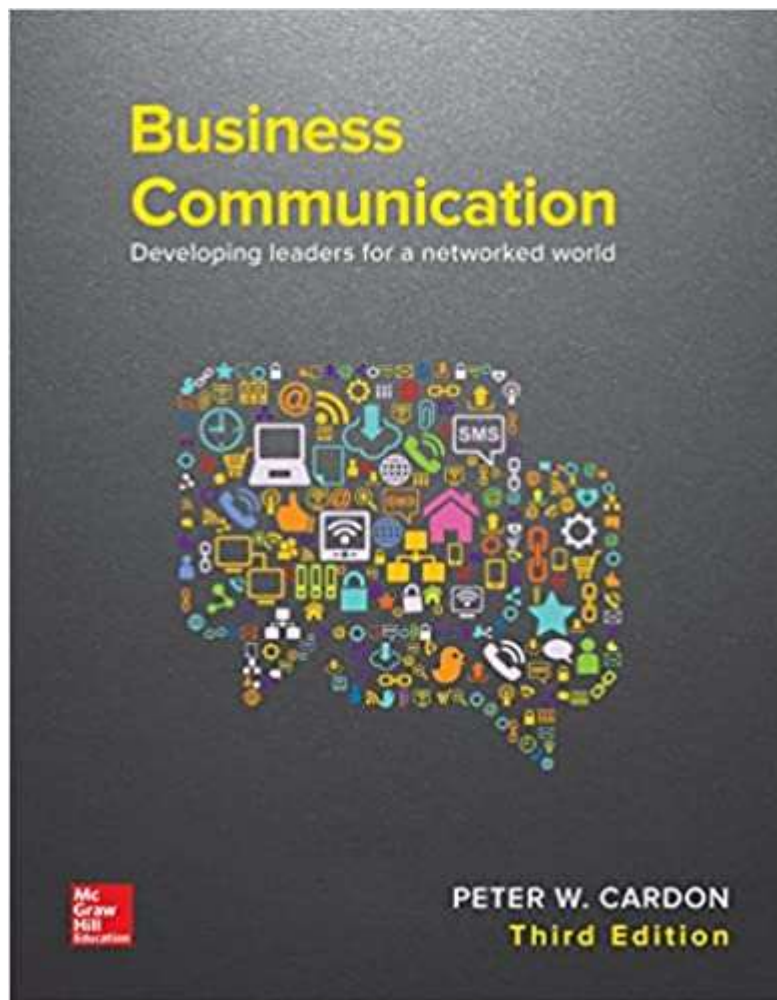


Introducing a Book:

***Business Communication:
Developing leaders for a networked world* by Peter W. Cardon**

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Courtesy: https://www.amazon.com/Business-Communication-Developing-Leaders-Networked/dp/1259694518/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=Business+Communication%3A+Developing+leaders+for+a+networked+world&qid=1604029374&s=books&sr=1-3

Politeness is an integral part of communication in Indian communities. Traders, shopkeepers and businessmen and businesswomen are usually considered to be more polite in their communication. These people look for a profit-making and this demands from their traditional point of view, a polite manner of verbal as well as nonverbal communication. Indian languages offer various structural devices to express politeness. For example, Tamil speakers often prefer to use second person plural marker in their speech when they address their customers. However, age (and the gender) of the person who is addressed in this direct communication also plays an important role. Young individuals may or may not be addressed with second person plural marker which carries greater respect shown to the person being addressed. The physical appearance of the customer (showing the socio-economic status of the person) is also an important factor. Even though one uses appropriate terms of address and reference, the tone with which individuals are addressed and referred to play a very crucial function! In any case, in all levels of business – from street corner shops to stores in the main bazar to the stores in the mall, etc. – communication between them and with their customers is traditionally expected to be cordial, polite, with willingness to accept bargaining to some extent. Face to face bargaining in the shops is losing its ground with the introduction of labeling and billing the price, etc., with MRP (maximum retail price) and so on.

Modernization of business and the introduction of electrical devices, etc. do not reduce the importance of polite communication. In fact, there is more insistence on equity in communication in companies, corporations, offices, schools and colleges and the stores in the Mall.

Communication does not revolve only around politeness, etc. It demands clarity of what is intended to be communicated. Business communication has become an important field to master for all involved in business administration and direct business activity. The level of status one occupies in a company or the type of activity one is engaged in is not relevant here: everyone in business administration or activity must do their best to master business communication.

Business Communication: Developing leaders for a networked world by **Peter W. Cardon** is an excellent tool to master business communication in modern context. However, the book does not offer Indian examples, and so it becomes necessary for the teachers and readers to closely observe Indian situations and come up with suitable examples. Concepts and examples offered in the book can be applied in different types and levels of businesses and business administration.

The book is divided into 5 Parts:

Part 1 Introduction to Business Communication.

This part has only one chapter: **1. Establishing Credibility.**

Note the title of the chapter instantly brings to our attention and establishes the most important part of business communication, namely, *establishing credibility*. If a business, businessman or woman and business administrators fail to establish and demonstrate their credibility, sustaining the business and its administration is going to be an exceedingly difficult problem. Employees must cultivate, establish, and demonstrate credibility in their communication.

Discussing the importance of establishing credibility, this chapter discusses the role of trust, the role of competence in establishing credibility, the role of caring in establishing credibility, the role of character in establishing credibility, among other items. The chapter also suggests how we can improve our communication skills.

Part 2 focuses on the **Principles of Interpersonal Communication**. This part has 3 chapters.

Chapter 2 Interpersonal Communication and Emotional Intelligence. The sections in this chapter discuss understanding interpersonal communication, emotional basis, self-awareness, self-management, empathy (active listening, recognizing barriers to effective listening, asking the right questions, avoiding the wrong questions, avoiding the traps of empathy, sight-reading nonverbal communication and building rapport), relationship management, use of mobile phones, and maintaining civility.

Chapter 3 Team Communication and Difficult Conversations discuss, among other things, principles of effective team communication, developing effective team communication and working in short-term teams, and managing meetings (Planning for meetings, running effective meetings, following up after meetings). The chapter also presents technology tips for online meetings under three major headings: Working in virtual teams, Group writing and managing difficult conversations. **Working in Virtual Teams** focuses on the following: Focus on building trust at each stage of our virtual team, meeting the other members in person if possible, getting to know one another, using collaborative technologies, choosing an active team leader, and running effective virtual meetings.

The section of **Group Writing** demands that we “start the process of group writing straightaway. Work together at the planning stage. Make sure your roles and roles and contributions are fair. Stay flexible and open. Meet in real time consistently and ensure the writing reflects the views of the group. Discuss how you will edit the document together. Consider a single group member to polish the final version and ensure a consistent voice.”

The final section of this chapter **Managing difficult conversations** suggest the following: “Embrace Difficult conversations and assume the best in others. Adopt a learning stance and commit to hearing everyone’s story. Stay calm and overcome noise. Find common ground. Disagree diplomatically. Avoid exaggeration and either/or approaches. Initiate the conversation, share stories, and focus on solutions.”

Chapter 4 Communicating across Cultures focus on the following:

This chapter has several sections: Developing Cultural Intelligence, Understanding Cultural Dimensions, Building and Maintaining Cross-Cultural Work Relationships, Learning the Etiquette of Another Culture, and Generation, Gender, and Other Group Identities. Developing Cultural Intelligence focuses on “Respect, Recognize, Appreciate Cultural Differences, Be Curious about Other Cultures, Avoid Inappropriate Stereotypes, Adjust Your Conceptions of Time,” and “Manage Language Differences.” The section on Understanding Cultural Dimensions discusses “Individualism and Collectivism, Egalitarianism and Hierarchy, Performance

Orientation, Future Orientation, Assertiveness, Humane Orientation, Uncertainty Avoidance, Gender Egalitarianism, and Business Values around the World.”

Part 3 is given the title **Principles of Business Messages**. It has four chapters.

Chapter 5 Creating Effective Business Messages. Sections include “The Process for Creating Business Messages”, “The AIM Planning” (Audience Analysis, Idea Development/Information Gathering, Message Development/Structuring), and “Setting the Tone of the Message.”

Chapter 6 Readability with Style and Design. The chapter has the following sections: “Improving Ease of Reading with Completeness (Provide All Relevant Information, Be Accurate, Be Specific), Improving Ease of Reading with Conciseness (Control Paragraph Length, Use Short Sentences in Most Cases, Avoid Redundancy, Avoid Empty Phrases, Avoid Wordy Prepositional Phrases), Improving Ease of Reading with Natural Style (Use Action Verbs When Possible, Use Active Voice, Use Short and Familiar Words and Phrases, Use Parallel Language, Avoid Buzz Words and Figures of Speech, Avoid It Is/There Are), Improving Ease of Reading with Navigational Design (Use Headings, Highlight Key Words and Phrases, Use Bulleted and Numbered Lists, Use White Space Generously, Keep it Simple), Reviewing Your Message.”

Chapter 7 Email and Other Traditional Tools for Business Communication. This chapter has the following sections: “Strategically Selecting Channels for Communication, Creating Effective Emails (Use Email for the Right Purposes, Ensure Ease of Reading, Show Respect for Others’ Time, Protect Privacy and Confidentiality, Respond Promptly, Maintain Professionalism and Appropriate Formality, Manage Emotion and Maintain Civility), Instant Messaging in the Workplace (Evaluate the Meta Message of the Instant Messaging, Use IM for Simple and Brief Conversations, Not for Important Decisions, Make Sure Your Tone Is Positive, Supportive, and Appropriately Fun, Don’t Ask Questions You Can Get Answers to Yourself, Be Careful about Abbreviated Language, Emotions, Acronyms, and Emoji, Avoid Sarcasm and Jokes in Most Cases, Avoid Rescheduling Meeting Times or Places, Consider Turning Off Sound Alerts for Incoming Messages/Emails, Identify Yourself, Clearly End the IM Exchange, Avoid Personal IM during Work Hours, Establish Rules with Your Colleagues for Instant Messaging in Meetings), Managing Your Digital Communication Efficiently, Building Connections with Phone Conversations (Schedule and Plan for Your Phone Calls, Ensure Quality Audio, Open with a Warm Greeting and Use Your Caller’s Name, After Brief Small Chat, Direct the Conversation to the Issues at Hand, Speak with a Pleasant, Enthusiastic Voice, Share Conversation Time Equally, Apply the Rule of Multitasking, Take Notes on Important Points and Summarize Next Steps at the End of the Call, Close with Appreciation, Follow Up on Agreements). Participating in and Leading Group Voice and Video Calls.”

Chapter 8 Social Media and Business Communication. This chapter has several sections. Communicating in the Workplace in the Social Change. Using Social Media Tools for Communication within Organizations (Organize Your Dashboard to Control Your Communication and Information Flow, Create a Complete and Professional Profile, Use Blogs and Status Updates for Team Communication, Use Shared Files to Collaborate, Solve Problems

with Discussion Forums, Other Social Media Tools), Writing Blogs for External Audiences, Guidelines for Using Social Media in the Workplace (Be an Active Contributor and Join Communities, Read, Listen, and Learn, Make Your Content Accessible, Make Your messages Authentic and Friendly, Be Responsive and Help Others, Respect boundaries and Avoid Oversharing), Using Social Media Ethically.

Part 4 Types of Business Messages

Chapter 9 Routine Business Messages. Developing Routine Messages, Making Requests, Setting Expectations, Providing Directions, Responding to Inquiries, Creating Announcements, Making Claims, Showing Appreciation, Making Apologies, Expressing Sympathy.

Chapter 10 Persuasive Messages. The Importance of Credibility in an Era of Mistrust and Skepticism, Applying the AIM Planning Process to Persuasive Messages (Understand Your Audience, Gather the Right Information, Set Up the Message), Getting the Tone and Style Right for Persuasive Messages (Apply the Personal Touch, Use Action-Oriented and Lively Language), Write with Confidence, Offer Choice, Show Positivity), Creating Internal Persuasive Messages, Constructing External Persuasive Messages, Composing Mass Sales Messages, Reviewing Persuasive Messages.

Chapter 11 Bad-News Messages. Maintaining When Delivering News, Applying the AIM Planning Process for Bad-News Messages (Understand How the Bad-News Will Affect Audience, Gather Information from a Variety of Sources, Develop Your Message), Getting the Tone, Style, and Design Right, Delivering Bad-News to Clients, Turning Down Requests and Ideas, Delivering Bad News to Customers, Delivering and Receiving Negative Performance Messages (Get Back and Reread, Apply the FAIR Test).

Part 5 Reports and Presentations

12 Research and Business Proposals and Planning for Business Reports

The following sections are included in this chapter: Analyzing your Audience for Business Reports, Gathering Information through Primary Research (Develop Research Objectives, Create Surveys, Analyze Your Data, Communicate with Charts and Tables, Create Effective Charts, General Rules of Chart Formatting, Design Effective Tables), Gathering Information through Secondary Research (Choose a Research Topic, Evaluate Data Quality, Conduct Your Library Research, Document Your Research, Use Online Information for Business Research), Applying the FAIR Test to Your Research Data and Charts.

13 Completing Business Proposals and Business Reports

The following sections are included in this chapter: Developing Business Proposals, Demonstrating Excellent Thinking by Applying a Precision-Oriented Style (Start with a Clear Statement of the Business Problem or Challenge, Use Fact-Based Language, Document Secondary Research and Avoid Plagiarism, Base Recommendations on Fact and Conclusions in the Report, Provide Specific and Actionable Recommendations), Designing Your Reports to Help Decision Makers (Tell the Story of Your Report with an Executive Summary, Provide the Story Line with

Descriptive Headings and Other Content Markers, Use Preview Statements to Frame Your Messages and Accentuate Takeaway Messages, Insert Charts and Tables to Draw Attention to Your Key Points, Apply Bulleted and Enumerated Lists to Make Passages Easier to Process, Create a Cover Page, a Table of Contents, and Appendixes), Achieving Objectivity and Positivity through Tone, Assessing Key Features of a Completed Report, Reviewing Your Reports for Fairness and Effectiveness.

Chapter 14 Planning Presentations. This chapter has the following sections: Applying the AIM Planning Process for Presentations (Analyze Your Audience and Gather the Right Information, Develop Your Message, Provide a Compelling Preview, Justify Your Views, Conclude with an Effective Review, Design Appealing Slides), Applying the Story Line approach to Your Presentations, Reviewing Your Presentations for Fairness and Effectiveness.

15. Delivering Presentations. The following sections are found in this chapter: Establishing Presence (Establishing Credibility, Maintain Authenticity, Know Your Material and Rehearse, Overcome Fear and Speak with Confidence, Focus on People, Stay Flexible, Use the Room to Your Advantage, Communicate Nonverbally, Dress for Success), Using Visual Aids and Handouts (Use Visuals without Losing Focus on You), (Use Handouts Effectively), Interacting with Your Audience (Field Questions, Mingle and Follow Up), Present Effectively in Teams (Be Clear with One Another about Your Objectives and Key Messages, Decide on Your Presentation Roles, Stand Together and Present a United Front, Refer to One Another's Points, Transition Effectively), Being a Supportive Audience Member.

Chapter 16 Employment Communications. Applying the AIM Planning Process to Resumes and Cover Letters (Identify Your Key Selling Points, Understand the Needs of Your Potential Employers, Develop Your Message for Resumes and Cover Letters), Getting the Tone, Style, and Design Right for Resumes and Cover Letters (Emphasize Accomplishments with Action Verbs, Quantify Accomplishments Where Possible, Position Your Most Important Contributions First, Remove Irrelevant Details, Avoid Cliches, Buzzwords, and Jargon, Be Exact and Avoid Errors, Group and Label Information to Improve Ease of Reading, Format to Distinguish Pieces of Information, Select a Simple Yet Visually Appealing Layout), Creating Chronological and Functional Resumes, Using LinkedIn Strategically, Developing a Reference List (Develop Relationships with Potential References over Time, Contact Your References Ahead of Time, Thank Your References, Complete a Consistently Formatted, Well-Detailed Reference List), Constructing Cover Letters (The Cover Letter Often Forms the First Impression, Clearly Identify the Position You are Applying For, Be Focused on Concise, Show a Confident and Enthusiastic Tone without Exaggerating or Displaying Arrogance, Tailor Your Cover Letter to the Job Posting and Needs of the Employer, Adapting for the Unsolicited Letters), Reviewing Your Resumes and Cover Letters, Acing the Job Interview (Dress for the Interview and Pay Attention to the Etiquette, Respond Effectively to Interview Questions, Succeed in Web Conference Interviews, Follow Up after the Job Interview), Leaving an Organization.

To Conclude

This is an excellent book. We should read this book section by section and find suitable examples on our own from Indian/South Asian contexts. I believe that this book will be found useful throughout the career of a student even after they graduate and become part of business administration in corporations, in stores, etc. Even when we start our own business, the ideas and examples and exercises presented in this book will be highly useful.

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